

PERCHLORATE REMEDIATION FACT SHEET

ISSUE:

The Board of Selectmen has called a Special Town Meeting (STM) to be held on July 30, 2009 for the purpose of appropriating funds in an effort to remediate the perchlorate contamination of the town's water supply and resources, and to prevent further contamination of the aquifer. Possible remediation measures include installing the Stepinski Well, installing associated transmission mains; constructing a new perchlorate treatment system; and upgrading the capacity of the Nutting Road Water Treatment Facility. Should the appropriation be approved, the Town will be eligible to apply for State Stimulus Funding which can include financing at a rate of approximately 1% and the potential for substantial principal forgiveness.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Westford has been responding to perchlorate contamination issues in the area surrounding Snake Meadow Hill since 2004. Based upon well sample results and the MassDEP perchlorate limit of 2 parts per billion (ppb) for potable water, the perchlorate contamination has adversely impacted private wells and one of the Town's public water supply wells (Cote Well). Current data now shows that the perchlorate plume has reached the site of the proposed new public water supply well, Stepinski Well. Therefore, the Town has determined that bringing the Stepinski Well online and treating the water will help prevent the plume from further contaminating the aquifer downstream.

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING ARTICLE:

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate funds to be raised by taxation, by transfer from available funds, by borrowing from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust or otherwise, or any combination thereof for the purpose of remediating perchlorate contamination, by upgrading the Cote Well, developing and installing a new well on the Stepinski parcel, installing a water transmission line, constructing a resin-based perchlorate treatment facility, upgrading the capacity of the Nutting Road Water Treatment Facility, including costs incidental and relative thereto, with said appropriation to be under the control of the Board of Selectmen.

KEY POINTS:

- The Town and Maine Drilling & Blasting were identified as Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs) in the Notice of Responsibility (NOR) issued in October 2007 by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP).
- As part of the NOR, the PRPs are required to provide source control of the perchlorate contamination.
- The Town has already installed treatment at two new wells located at the Highway Facility to remove perchlorate at the source on Snake Meadow Hill.
- This article would provide funds for a new perchlorate treatment system that would treat water from both the Cote and Stepinski Wells and would allow Cote Well to run at its original capacity, therefore treating a greater volume of contaminated water directly from the aquifer.
- The Town encourages residents to attend STM 7:30 pm at the Abbot School on July 30, 2009. A quorum of 200 voters is required.